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## **12 TRAVEL/OTHER REIMBURSEMENTS**

### **12.1 Travel Rules and Regulations (P.P.M. 49)**

#### **12.1.1 Introduction**

##### **12.1.1.1 Authorization and Legal Basis**

In accordance with the authority vested in the Commissioner of Administration by Section 231 of Title 39 of the Revised Statutes of 1950 and in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R. S. 49:951-968 as amended, notice is hereby given of the revision of Policy and Procedures Memorandum No. 49, the State General Travel Regulations, effective October 20, 1990. These amendments are both technical and substantive in nature and are intended to clarify certain portions of the previous regulations or provide for more efficient administration of travel policies. These regulations apply to all state departments, boards, and commissions created by the legislature or executive order and operating from funds appropriated, dedicated, or self-sustaining; federal funds; or funds generated from any other source.

**Legal Basis** - L.R.S. 39:231 - "The Commissioner, with the approval of the Governor, shall prescribe rules defining the conditions under which each of various forms of transportation may be used by state officers and employees and used by them in the discharge of the duties of their respective offices and positions in the State Service and he shall define the conditions under which allowances will be granted for all other classes of traveling expenses and the maximum amount allowable for expenses of each class."

##### **12.1.1.2 General Specifications**

###### **1. Department Policies**

Department heads may establish travel regulations within their respective agencies, but such regulations shall not exceed the maximum limitations established by the Commissioner of Administration. Three copies of such regulations shall be submitted for prior review and approval by the Commissioner of Administration.

###### **2. Department and agency heads will take whatever action necessary to minimize all travel to carry on the department mission.**

###### **3. Contracted Travel Services**

The State has contracted for travel-related services which must be used unless exemptions have been granted by the Division of Administration. Reservations for in-state hotel/motel accommodations are not required to be made through the contracted travel agencies.

**4. Authorization to Travel**

- a. All travel must be authorized and approved in writing by the head of the department, board, or commission from whose funds the traveler is paid. A department head may delegate this authority in writing to one designated person. Additional persons within a department may be designated with approval from the Commissioner of Administration. A file shall be maintained on all approved travel authorizations.
- b. An annual authorization for routine travel shall not cover travel between an employee's home and workplace, out-of-state travel, or travel to conferences or conventions.

**5. Funds for Travel Expenses**

Persons traveling on official business will provide themselves with sufficient funds for all routine travel expenses that can be covered by the corporate credit card. Advances of funds for travel shall be made only for extraordinary travel and should be punctually repaid when submitting the travel voucher covering the related travel, not later than the fifteenth (15th) day of the month following the completion of travel. **Exemptions:** Cash advances may be allowed for:

- Employees whose salary is less than \$15,000/year.
- Employees who applied for the state-sponsored corporate credit card program but were rejected (proof of rejection must be available in an agency travel file).
- Employees who accompany and/or are responsible for students on group or client travel.
- New employees who have not had time to apply for and receive the corporate credit card.
- Employees traveling for extended periods.
- Employees traveling to remote destinations in foreign countries, such as jungles of Peru or Bolivia.
- Advance ticket purchase (until a business travel account with a corporate credit card can be established).
- Registration for seminars, conferences, and conventions.
- Incidental costs not covered by the corporate credit card (i.e., taxi fares, tolls, registration fees; conference fees may be submitted on a preliminary request for reimbursement when paid in advance).
- Any ticket booked by a travel thirty (30) days or more in advance and for which the traveler has been billed, may be reimbursed by the agency to the traveler on a preliminary expense reimbursement request. The traveler should submit the request with a copy of the bill or invoice. All backup data (ticket stub or traveler's copy) must be attached to the final reimbursement request.

**6. Expenses Incurred on State Business**

Traveling expenses of travelers shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred by them in the performance of a public purpose authorized by law to be performed by the agency and must be within the limitations prescribed herein.

**7. State Credit Cards (Issued in the Name of the Agency Only)**

Credit cards issued in the name of the state agency are not to be used for the purpose of securing transportation, lodging, meals, or telephone and telegraph service, unless prior written permission has been obtained from the Commissioner of Administration.

**8. No Reimbursement When No Cost Incurred by Traveler**

No claim for reimbursement shall be made for any lodging and/or meals furnished at a state institution or other state agency, or furnished by any other party at no cost to the traveler. In no case will a traveler be allowed mileage or transportation when he/she is gratuitously transported by another person.

**12.1.1.3 Claims for Reimbursement**

1. All claims for reimbursement for travel shall be submitted on State FORM BA-12, unless exception has been granted by the Commissioner of Administration, and shall include all details provided for on the form. It must be signed by the person claiming reimbursement and approved by his/her immediate supervisor. The purpose for extra and unusual travel must be stated in the space provided on the front of the form. In all cases, the date and hour of departure from and return to domicile must be shown.
2. Excepting where the cost of air transportation, conference, or seminar is invoiced directly to the agency/department, all expenses incurred on any official trip shall be paid by the traveler and his travel voucher shall show all such expenses in detail to the end that the total cost of the trip shall be reflected by the travel voucher. If the cost of air transportation is paid directly by the agency/department, a notation will be indicated on the travel voucher indicating the date of travel, destination, amount, and the fact that it has been paid by the agency/department. The traveler's copy of the passenger ticket shall be attached to the travel voucher.
3. In all cases, and under any travel status, cost of meals and lodging shall be paid by the traveler and claimed on the travel voucher for reimbursement, and not charged to the state department, unless otherwise authorized by the Division of Administration.
4. Claims should be submitted within the month following the travel, but preferably held until a reimbursement of at least \$10 (ten dollars) is due. In no case shall reimbursement for travel in a previous fiscal year be paid from a current year appropriations unless funds have been specifically reserved for that purpose.
5. Any person who submits a claim pursuant to these regulations and who willfully makes and subscribes to any claim which he/she does not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter, or who willfully aids or assists in, or procures, counsels, or advises the preparation or presentation of a claim which is fraudulent or is false as to any material matter shall be guilty of

official misconduct. Whoever shall receive an allowance or reimbursement by means of a false claim shall be subject to severe disciplinary action as well as being criminally and civilly liable within the provisions of State Law.

### **12.1.2 Definitions**

For the purposes of this Policy and Procedures Memorandum (PPM), the following words have the meaning indicated.

#### **12.1.2.1 State Officer**

1. State elected officials.
2. Department head as defined by Title 36 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes (secretary, deputy secretary, undersecretary, assistant secretary, and the equivalent positions in higher education and the office of elected officials).

#### **12.1.2.2 State Employee**

1. Employees below the level of state officer.

#### **12.1.2.3 Authorized Persons**

1. Advisors, consultants, or other persons who are called upon to contribute time and services to the state who are not otherwise required to be reimbursed through a contract for professional, personal, or consulting services in accordance with R.S. 39:1481 et.seq.
2. Members of boards, commissions, and advisory councils required by federal or state legislation or regulation. Travel allowance levels for all such members any any staff shall be those authorized for state employees unless specific allowances are legislatively provided.

#### **12.1.2.4 Official Domicile**

1. Every state officer, employee, and authorized person, except those on temporary assignment, shall be assigned an official domicile.
2. Except where fixed by law, official domicile of an officer or employee assigned to an office shall be, at a minimum, the city limits in which the office is located. The department head or his designee should determine the extent of any surrounding area to be included, such as parish or

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region. As a guideline, a radius of at least 30 miles is recommended. The official domicile of an authorized person shall be the city in which the person resides, except when the department head has designated another location (such as the person's workplace).

3. A traveler whose residence is other than the office domicile of his/her office shall not receive travel and subsistence while at his/her official domicile nor shall he/she receive reimbursement for travel to and from his/her residence.
4. The official domicile of a person located in the field shall be the city or town nearest to the area where the majority of work is performed, or such city, town, or area as may be designated by the department head, provided that in all cases such designation must be in the best interests of the agency and not for the convenience of the person.

### **12.1.2.5 Temporary Assignment**

1. Any assignment made for a period of less than thirty-one (31) consecutive days at a place other than the official domicile.

### **12.1.2.6 Traveler**

A state officer, state employee, or authorized person when performing authorized travel.

### **12.1.2.7 Travel Period**

A period of time between the time of departure and the time of return.

### **12.1.2.8 Travel Routes**

The most direct and usually traveled route must be used by official state travelers. All mileage shall be computed on the basis of odometer readings from point of origin to point of return.

### **12.1.2.9 In-State Travel**

All travel within the borders of Louisiana or travel through adjacent states between points within Louisiana when such is the most efficient route.

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### **12.1.2.10 Out-of-State Travel**

Travel to any of the other 49 states plus District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

### **12.1.2.11 Emergency Travel**

Under extraordinary circumstances where the best interests of the state require that travel be undertaken not in compliance with these regulations, approval after the fact by the Commissioner of Administration may be given, if appropriate documentation is presented promptly. Each department shall establish internal procedures for authorizing travel in emergency situations.

### **12.1.2.12 International Travel**

All travel to destinations outside the 50 United States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

### **12.1.2.13 Per Diem**

A flat rate paid in lieu of travel reimbursement for people on extended stays.

### **12.1.2.14 Conference/Convention**

A conference/convention is herein defined as a meeting for a specific purpose and/or objective. Documentation required is a formal agenda and/or program.

### **12.1.2.15 Extended Stays**

Any assignment made for a period of 31 or more consecutive days at a place other than the official domicile.

## **12.1.3 Methods of Transportation**

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The most cost-effective method of transportation that will accomplish the purpose of the travel shall be selected. Among the factors to be considered should be: length of travel time, cost of operation of a vehicle, cost and availability of common carrier services, etc.

### 12.1.3.1 Air Transportation

1. Common carrier shall be used for out-of-state travel unless it is documented that utilization of another method is more cost-efficient or practical and approved in accordance with these regulations.
2. Before travel by privately-owned or by chartered aircraft is authorized by a department head, the traveler shall certify that: 1) at least one hour of working time will be saved by such travel, and 2) no other form of transportation, such as commercial air travel or a state plane, will serve this same purpose.
3. Chartering a privately-owned aircraft must be in accordance with the Procurement Code.

Reimbursement for use of a chartered or unchartered privately-owned aircraft under the above guidelines will be made on the basis of 24 cents per mile or the lesser of commercial air at state contract rate or coach/economy rates unless there are extenuating circumstances which must be approved by the Commissioner of Administration.

When common carrier services are unavailable and time is at a premium, travel via state aircraft shall be investigated, and such investigation shall be documented and readily available in the department's travel reimbursement files. Optimum utilization will be the responsibility of the department head.

4. Commercial air travel will not be reimbursed in excess of state contract air rates when available, or coach/economy class rates when contract rates are not available. The difference between contract or coach/economy class rates and first class or business class rates will be paid by the traveler. If space is not available in less than first or business class air accommodations in time to carry out the purpose of the travel, the traveler will secure a certification from the airline indicating this fact. The certification will be attached to the travel voucher.
  - a. The state encourages, but does not require, use of lowest priced airfares where circumstances which can be documented dictate otherwise.
  - b. Where a stopover is required to qualify for a low-priced airfare, the state will pay additional lodging and meals expense subject to applicable limits where a net savings in total trip expenses results from use of the low-priced airfare. For determining whether there is a savings, the state contract airfare should be used for comparison, or coach/economy fare if there is no contract rate. The comparison must be shown on the travel voucher.



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- c. The policy regarding airfare penalties is the state will pay the penalty incurred for a change in plans or cancellation only when the change or cancellation is required by the state. Certification of the requirement for the change or cancellation by the traveler's department head is required on the travel voucher.
- d. For international travel only, when an international flight segment is more than 10 hours in duration, the state will allow the business class rate not to exceed 10 percent of the coach rate. The traveler's itinerary provided by the travel agency must document the flight segment as more than 10 hours and must be attached to the travel voucher.

### 12.1.3.2 Motor Vehicle Transportation

No vehicle may be operated in violation of state or local laws. No traveler may operate a vehicle without having in his/her possession a valid state driver's license.

If available, safety restraints shall be used by the driver and passengers of vehicles. All accidents, major and minor, shall be reported first to the local police department or appropriate law enforcement agency. An accident report form, available from the Office of Risk Management (ORM) of the Division of Administration, should be completed as soon as possible and returned to ORM, together with names and addresses of principals and witnesses. Any questions about this should be addressed to the Office of Risk Management of the Division of Administration. These reports shall be in addition to reporting the accident to the Department of Public Safety, as required by law.

#### 1. State-Owned Vehicles.

- a. All purchases made on state gasoline credit cards must be signed for by the approved traveler making the purchase. The license number and the unit price and quantity of the commodity purchases must be noted on the delivery ticket by the vendor. Items incidental to the operation of the vehicle may be purchased via state gasoline credit cards only when away from official domicile on travel status. In all instances where a credit card is used to purchase items or services which are incidental to the operation of a vehicle, the tissue copy of the credit ticket along with a written explanation of the reason for the purchase will be attached to the monthly report mentioned in this subsection.

State-owned credit cards will not be issued to travelers for use in the operation of privately-owned vehicles.

- b. Travelers in state-owned automobiles who purchase needed repairs and equipment while on travel status shall make use of all fleet discount allowances and state bulk purchasing contracts, where applicable. Each agency/department shall familiarize itself with the existence of such allowances and/or contracts and location of vendors by contacting the Purchasing Office, Division of Administration.

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- c. The travel coordinator/officer/user of each state-owned automobile shall submit a monthly report to the department head, board, or commission indicating the number of miles traveled, odometer reading, credit card charges, dates, and places visited.
- d. State-owned vehicles may be used for out-of-state travel only if permission of the department head has been given prior to departure. If a state-owned vehicle is to be used to travel to a destination more than 500 miles from its usual location, documentation that this is the most cost-effective means of travel should be readily available in the department's travel reimbursement files.
- e. Unauthorized persons should not be transported in state vehicles. Approval of exceptions to this policy may be made by the traveler's supervisor if he/she determines that the best interest of the state will be served and if the passenger (or passenger's guardian) signs a statement acknowledging the fact that the state assumes no liability for any loss, injury, or death resulting from said travel.

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